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ABSTRACT

Most of this early childhood unit on toys provides suggestions for toy-making activities in the areas of art, games, music, science, math, creative dramatics, language arts, social studies, cooking and bulletin boards. It also suggests resources (such as field trips and persons with special knowledge of toys). Special emphasis is placed on children's decision making and creative behaviors. Before the toy unit is implemented, it is suggested that all toys be removed from the classroom and/or play centers. Simultaneously, materials children can use to build replacements for missing toys or new toys should be stockpiled in out-of-the-way but accessible locations. When children recognize a problem resulting from the lack of toys, they are then guided to a solution involving toy construction activities. Included is a bibliography citing related books, poems, and fingerplays; movies; filmstrips; records; and reference books. A form for recording children's progress in toy making is provided. (RH)

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TOYS - Medium For The Development of Decision Making and Creativity in Children

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EARLY CHILDHOOD
UNITS

These units were developed for use with young children in day care centers, head start programs, nursery schools, kindergartens, and other Early Childhood programs. Each unit contains activities in art, music, language arts, social studies, science, math, creative drama, physical education and reading readiness, that make it possible to teach the stated behavioral objectives and generalizations. A check list for evaluation also is included in each unit. Suggestions for bulletin boards, field trips, cooking activities, and a multi-media bibliography are included.

Judy Finkelstein
Delsie Foreman
Jean Kelly

- -

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TOYS - Medium For The Development of Decision Making and Creativity in Children

I. Introduction:

Through experimenting, planning, and problem solving, this unit will develop decision making skills and provide the child with new insights into his world of toys.

Before introducing the unit, all the toys, playhouse furniture, etc., were put into storage and/or loaned out to other rooms in the school. We also secured boxes of all sizes (from refrigerator cartons to one half pint milk cartons), wood scraps, nails, styrofoam packing materials, spools (for thread and wire), and discarded "junk" from various small manufacturers in the area, that we thought might be needed when construction started. We "planted" these in the janitor's office and other likely places so they would be on hand when needed.

The children came in and immediately noticed our loss. We discussed what might have happened to all of our toys and what we could do to solve the problem. Once we had reached a solution, we talked about what we would need and where we might find the necessary materials. We then proceeded to gather the materials close at hand. Plans were made to gather other materials later. Each child was encouraged to choose a particular project he would be responsible for and to decide how to proceed with materials to achieve his final product. We handled new problems that arose throughout the unit in a similar manner.

The unit was climaxed by a program for our parents. Each child chose the one toy he thought was his best and explained what it was, how it was made, and how it could be used.

The unit lasted approximately four weeks; however, group involvement, initiative, etc., needs to be constantly evaluated. This should be the prime factor in determining its duration.

AUTHORS' NOTE: If you are unable to store all equipment as suggested above, this unit can be used to solve the problem "How can we get some new (more or different) toys for our room?"

II. Generalizations:

1. Planning and construction of toys offers many opportunities to develop skill in decision making through the scientific problem solving approach.
2. Solving these problems encourages the use of imagination in constructing toys and in discovering ways to use them.
3. Division of labor is a practical and time saving way to approach work.

III. Objectives:

1. The child will state a problem he has due to lack of toys.
2. The child will offer a solution to the problem.
3. The child will list and gather the necessary materials to construct his toy.
4. The child will solve his problem by constructing at least one toy he needs.
5. The child will state at least one way to use the toy he has constructed.
6. In his play the child will use the toy he has made.
7. The child will participate in an assembly line where a product is made by team effort.

IV. Curricular Emphases:

The main emphasis of this unit is decision making using the scientific problem approach. As a problem arises due to lack of toys, the children are asked to state the problem, e.g., "We need dishes for the playhouse." Then they are guided by questioning to offer solutions, e.g., "We can make them." Having offered this solution, they will decide what materials are needed and where these can be obtained. After gathering the necessary materials, they will attempt their solution, e.g., actually making the dishes. As they investigate and solve these problems, the areas of Creativity, Language Arts, Science, Math, and Social Studies will be used.

V. Activities:

A. Art:

1. Puppets:

a. Finger Puppets - Draw a small picture of toy or character (see filmstrips - Walt Disney), cut it out and make two small circles in it for fingers.

b. Paper Bag - Decorate the bottom of a paper bag with facial features. Use paper scraps for face, hat, etc.; add yarn bits for hair.

c. Cereal Box - Collect enough individual cereal boxes so each child may have one. Remove the paper, etc. from the open edge. Cover one side of the box with construction paper; add features with crayon, paper scraps, felt, yarn, old buttons, lace, ric rac, etc.

d. Kitchen Utensil - Use strainers, spatulas, wooden spoons and potatoe mashers. Add features with tempera paint. Use yarn bits for hair.

2. Puzzles:

   a. Draw a picture of a favorite toy on a piece of tagboard. Cut into pieces. Put pieces in small sacks to keep them all together.
   b. Cut pictures from magazine. Mount on tagboard or masonite. Cut into pieces. (If masonite is used, a jig saw is needed for cutting.)

3. Musical Instruments:

   a. Cymbals - Use 2 lids, 2 pan covers, or 2 aluminum pie tins.
   b. Drums - Use coffee can with lid, oatmeal boxes, or empty salt containers which can be painted or decorated with paper scraps. Add string so child can hang it around his neck while playing it.
   c. Shaker - Partially fill salt container with sand, secure lid with glue or tape, and decorate.
   d. Sand Blocks - Use two pieces of wood that have been covered on one side with sandpaper.
   e. Rhythm Sticks - Each child paints two small wooden dowels (about ½" circumference and 10" to 12" in length) with tempera paint.
   f. String Instrument - Place 3 rubber bands of different widths on a cheese box. Decorate.

4. Drawing and Coloring:

   a. Draw a toy that makes you think of water, snow, running, jumping, circles, etc.
   b. Draw your favorite toy and dictate a short story about it.
   c. Draw while listening to music - draw the toy it makes you think of. Painting also can be done to music.

5. Imaginary Toy - Construct an imaginary toy using small boxes, tin cans, paper and material scraps, crayons, paint, pipe cleaners, cardboard, straws, macaroni, etc.

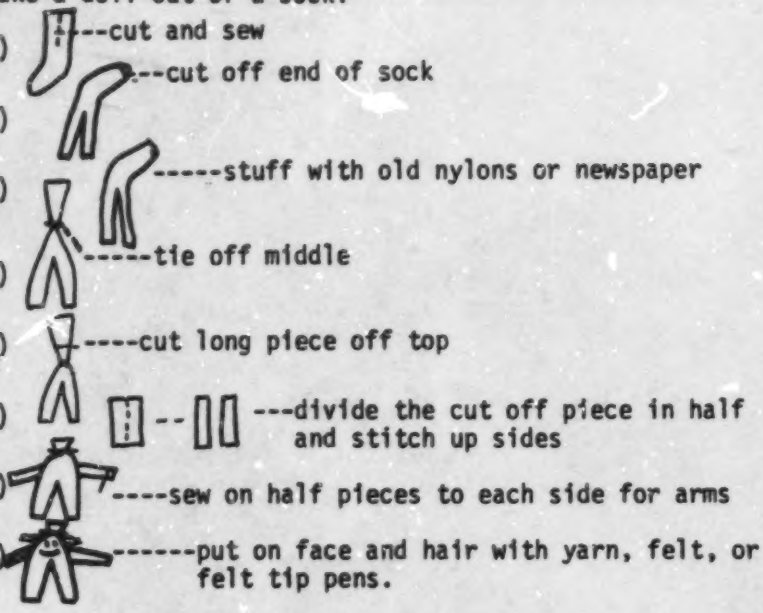
6. Boats:

   a. Use small milk cartons with stick and paper or fabric for a sail.
   b. Build boats with wood scraps.

7. Dolls:

   a. Stuffed paper dolls can be made by drawing 2 doll outlines on heavy paper. Cut out and lace together with yarn. Stuff with old nylons or newspaper. Color on features and clothes before stuffing, or make fabric clothes and yarn hair.
   b. These could be made life sized. Trace around each child. Cut out 2 of these patterns. Have the child draw on his/her hair, features, and clothes. Sew together with yarn and stuff with newspapers. Parent and/or older student could help with this project.

c. Make a doll out of a sock:



8. Tops - A 6" circle of heavy paper colored different colors can be used to make a top. Push a pencil or a stick sharpened at one end into the middle of the circle.

9. Doll Furniture - A shoe box can be used for a doll house. Furniture can be made from wood blocks, spools, buttons, small boxes, and other containers. Spool or clothespin dolls can be made to play with in the house.

10. Doll Dishes and Food - Make from clay or salt dough.

11. Costumes:

    a. Create characters for dramatization by cutting arm holes in a large paper bag. Add head, eyes, nose, and mouth using paint or crayons.
    b. Hats can be made from paper, newspaper, boxes, paper plates, plastic containers, etc. Use construction paper, lace, ric rac, plastic flowers, buttons, tissue paper and pipe cleaners to decorate.
    c. Use pillow cases for creating a costume. Color with crayons or magic markers. Cut holes for head and arms---

12. Jewelry - String colored macaroni, straws, buttons, etc. to make necklaces, bracelets, and pins. To color macaroni cover with food coloring and water until desired color is accomplished. Spread on wax paper to dry.

13. Cars, Trains, Buses, Etc. - Nail buttons or plastic wheels loosely to small boxes or wood blocks. Decorate with tempera paint. (Bottle caps can be used for wheels.)

14. Smell Book - Construct booklet by drawing, cutting, and pasting items from paper soaked in various odors (cocoa, orange, coffee, onion, etc.).

15. Space Ships - Decorate cardboard cylinder. Add paper cone-shaped ends, paper fins, windows, etc.

16. Painting:

    a. Paint pictures of favorite toys, imaginary toys.
    b. Paint toys that have been constructed.

17. Paint various sizes of milk cartons to make blocks. Put liquid dish washing detergent in the paint and it will go on over the wax cartons.

18. Find some sturdy large boxes. Cover with colored paper (or paint) to make stove, refrigerator, cupboard, etc. for the play house.

19. Provide pellon and/or felt. Have the children draw and cut out characters for the flannelboard.

B. Games:

1. Visit to a Toy Shop - The child dramatizes a toy, and others guess what it is.

2. Did You Ever See A Toy? - (tune: Did You Ever See A Lassie?) Use different toys the children suggest.

3. Afternoon In The Park - Children do hand movements while an imaginary child plays on playthings in the park. (Pat hands on knees as he walks from one thing to another. Use hands to show climbing ladder, sliding down the slide, etc.) Children can help think of other things the child might play on in the park. Mother calls, "Time to eat the picnic." Child, anxious and hungry, runs back through each activity faster and faster to get to the picnic table.

4. Here We Go Round the Toy Shop (tune: Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush)

   Here we go round the toy shop,
   the toy shop, the toy shop,
   Here we go round the toy shop,
   So early in the morning.

   Other verses:

   This is the way the dolly moves.
   This is the way the soldier marches.
   This is the way the top spins round.
   This is the way the Jack-in-the-Box pops.
   This is the way the train goes chugging.
   Etc.

5. Toy Hunt - Have three children leave the room. Another child hides a doll, truck, etc. in plain sight. Then the three children return to the room. The group counts to 25 while they look for the toy. When a child sees it, he must sit down and say nothing. After they have all sat down, the first one who saw it retrieves the toy.

6. Pass the Toy (Hot Potato) - Children sit in a circle with one in the center of the circle. While music plays, a toy is passed around the circle. When the music stops, the one holding the toy must go to the center of the circle.

7. Toy Man in the Dell - (tune: Farmer in the Dell) Have the children choose the characters (toys) wanted and list them on an experience chart. Play like Farmer in the Dell.

8. Follow the Toy - (Follow the Leader) The child who is the leader must act out the part of a toy.

9. Jack-in-the-Box Says - (Simon Says) Leader gives direction such as "Jump, sit down, or turn around." Children respond only to those directions preceded by "Jack-in-the-Box says."

10. High-Low Game - Children respond to piano notes moving at high levels if music played is high and at a low level if the music played is low.

11. Children can design and create games, construct them, and play them in small groups. These can be table games or group games.

C. Music:

<u>The Kindergarten Book</u>, Ginn

Jack-in-the-Box	p. 127
Jumping Jack	127
I'm a Spinning Top	127
Dolly	128
My Top	128
We're Wooden Soldiers Marching	130
I'm A Big Train	131
Train	132
Airplane	134
I'm An Airplane	134

<u>The Magic of Music</u>, Ginn

My Little Red Drum	p. 9
My Dolly	74
Big Drum and Little Drum	128

The Small Singer, Bowmar

Come and Play With Me.	p.	75
A Tea Party.		76
Playing In The Sand.		77
Don't Cry Little Dolly		78
Chug Chug Chug		96
Little Red Caboose		97
In My Plane.		100

American Singer, American Book Company

My Little Red Wagon.	p.	9

Music For Early Childhood, Silver Burdett

Dolly's Lullaby.	p.	12
Let's Take a Little Trip		23
Bouncing Balls		38
Jump and Hop		39
Sand In The Box.		62

This Is Music, Allyn and Bacon

The Doll	p.	32
Dress Up Clothes		34
Peter's Lion House		34
The Carpenter's Hammer		36
My Rocket Ship		67
Who Has The Penny.		49

Additional Musical Activities:

1. Choose a familiar tune e.g., Turkey In The Straw, Row, Row, Row Your Boat, etc. Write words for an original song. Make up actions to accompany.

D. Science:

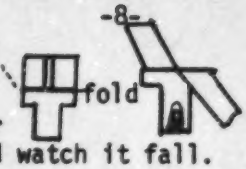
1. Use the scientific problem solving approach throughout the unit. All of the primary processes are used extensively.

2. Feely Bags - Place a toy in a paper bag. Ask the child to reach into the bag without looking, and to describe and name the toy using only his sense of touch.

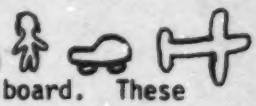
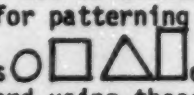
3. Imitate noises made by toys. Classify into loud, soft, shrill, scary, etc.

4. Construct from milk cartons or covered baby food jars a set of sound containers. Place a tablespoon or two or rice, dried lima beans, sand, small pebbles, etc. in separate containers. Child tries to guess what is inside by shaking the container.

5. Make a helicopter using the following pattern: Have child trace and cut it out. Place a paper clip on the bottom. Drop from a high place and watch it fall.



E. Math:

1. Classify toys made by children or brought from home, by size, shape, color, use, noise, and materials.
2. Prepare numbered dot to dot pictures of toys for children to complete.
3. Count toys in the room. How many dolls, trucks, etc.? Which set has more? Less?
4. Identify shapes in toys.
5. Count pieces used to make various toys.
6. Count number of finished products that came off the assembly line.
7. Make cutouts of toys (dolls, airplane, car, etc.)  out of flannel for use as counters on the flannelboard. These also can be used for patterning activities.
8. Cut various shapes  out of felt. Children design toys on flannelbaord using these shapes.
9. Provide a magnetic board and magnetic shapes. Children design toys on magnetic board using the magnetic shapes.
10. Make a toy store. Put prices on the toys. Make a bank. Have children make play money to buy the toys to play with. Rotate jobs - banker, store clerk, customes. Make appropriate badges or hats.

F. Creative Dramatics:

1. Imitate various toys and their sounds.
2. Puppet Show - Let each group present the story they have written (see Language Arts activity #10) to the group.
3. Children imitate robots, rag dolls, soldiers, trains, to appropriate music.
4. Dress up in dress up clothes and role play.
5. Asterisks appear in the following Sound Story and Movement Story. These indicate the points at which the children should make the appropriate sound or movement. The teacher should work out a signal system with the children prior to using the stories. For instance, in the sound story when the asterisk appears the teacher will raise her hand and the children will make the sound. When she lowers her hand the children cease making the sound.

Movement Story:

Let's get on Toy Train. All you cars make a line.* Sue, you be the engine, and Joe, you be the caboose. Here we go off to the big city filled with toys for the children.* Chug, chug, chug, up the hill and wrwrwrwrwrwrwrwr down the hill we go. Around this bend and into the station. Our train is so full of toys. Let's look in the cars. Here is a car full of tools. You can be a hammer * and now a saw * back and forth, back and forth. How about a drill * round and round and round you go. On we go to the next car. Oh look at all those basketballs, bounce and bounce and bounce and up you go through the hoop.* Good. Bounce on over to the next car.* This one is full of dolls. There's Stretch Armstrong. Stretch out his leg.* Now his arm.* Pull on that neck.* There's the Incredible Hulk. How he walks with heavy feet.* Oh, there's Barbie. See her dance.* There's Amy * and the Sunshine Family.*

This next car is one that is full of match box cars. Drive the race car.* And now that old fashioned car.* Here we come in an ambulance.* This one is a motorcycle.* Drive it over here and stop.* We can look in the last car. Oh, it's all full of playhouse furniture. There's a bed as nice as the one Goldilocks slept in. Lie down like she did and take a rest.* You've had a busy time on Toy Train.

Sound Story:

Our toy shop is a busy place. Listen to the people making cars and boats out of wood. First they saw the wood,* then pound in the nails.* Now it must be sanded,* and finally put on some paint.* Those look nice!

Some people are making puzzles on the jig saw.* It does make a loud noise.*

These balls of play dough are fun. You can pound them flat into plates * and dishes for the playhouse.* Now roll them into knives and forks and spoons.* We need some dress up clothes, too. Cut the fabric,* now sew it together.* Then take your crayons and color designs on them.*

Over here some people are painting blocks.* Some of them are big and some are little.

And these people are making musical instruments.* Such nice sounds.* This one is like a guitar.* This one is like a flute.*

These people are making puppets come alive. One can be a bear.* This one is a dragon.* Here is a pig.* This green one must be an alligator.* Now it looks like the toy shop is closing down for the night. Turn off the lights* and close the door.* Lock it up tight.* See you tomorrow.*

G. Language Arts:

1. Encourage children to bring toys that are noisy and toys that are quiet to share. Make a list of words used to describe the toys.

2. Have child describe an outdoor toy he has at home. Others try to guess what it is.

3. Help the child decide the rules necessary for playing a game he has constructed. Write these on an experience chart.

4. Label toys constructed with appropriate names.

5. Let the children dictate stories describing the process used in constructing their toys. Older students or teacher's aides may take dictation.

6. Let the child tell the class what his toy is and how it might be used.

7. As a group, make an experience chart of steps used to construct a toy.

8. Let the children teach each other to play games they have constructed.

9. Record on a tape recorder the sounds various toys make. The children listen and try to guess the toy, e.g., rattle, car moving, drum, electric train, balls bouncing, and blowing up a balloon.

10. Let small groups working together dictate on a tape recorder a story using their puppets. Use these for the puppet show in creative dramatics.

11. After designing and making an Imaginary Toy (art activity #5) have the child describe it and tell what it can do. Record this. Place these on a table so all can see.

12. Using the following guide for writing stories, have the children dictate an original story to a sixth grade friend or adult. Copy these on 4" x 8" sheets of manila folded in half to make books for the classroom. Child who makes the story can illustrate and make a cover. Some stories could also be dictated on to a tape recorder and listened to by the children.

    a. Choose the kind of story this will be:
        1) fairy tale,
        2) animal story,
        3) about a family,
        4) about a person,
        5) adventure,
        6) make believe,
        7) monster,
        8) "Star Wars," etc.

b. Decide where the story will take place.
c. Think about the beginning, middle and end of the story. (A fairy tale must have something magical happen in it, also.)
d. Write the story. Read it over. Change it, if you need to. Read it again. Make final changes. Choose a title.
e. Divide it up to fit on the pages of the book.
f. Draw the pictures.
g. Put on a cover. Be sure to put the title and author's name on the front.

H. Social Studies:

1. Problem Solving - Discuss the following questions:

a. "What has happened to our room?" ("All the toys in our room are gone.")
b. "What shall we do?"

Record the session on the tape recorder so you can recall ideas. Evaluate the individual child's involvement and assess his level of thinking (unrelated, concrete, abstract).

Accept all suggestions, encouraging the children to evaluate their answers by further questioning, e.g., if some suggest buying them, you might ask: "Where would we get enough money?"

If the idea of making toys is offered, follow up with "What materials will we need to make these toys?" List materials on a chart. "Where will we get these materials?" (It is helpful to have boxes of various sizes, wood scraps, etc., placed about the building before hand.) "How will we use these materials?"

If your situation allows, you could write letters to various people (parents, too) who might be willing to donate materials for making specific toys and provide specific things the children think they will need.

2. Use the same approach as they identify other problems:

a. furniture for playhouse (table, chairs, sink, stove, cupboard)
b. dishes for playhouse
c. toys for water table
d. sand box toys
e. dolls
f. dress up clothes

3. Flannelboards - Mount toy pictures on felt, and cut into several pieces. The children try to put them together on the flannelboard.

I. Cooking:

1. Construct toys using gum drops, marshmallows, and toothpicks. If hands are washed before constructing, the toys may be eaten.

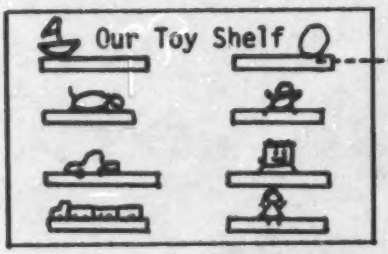
2. Make a candy airplane with a peppermint stick and a piece of gum glued across to form wings. A paper tail and propeller may be added. Use frosting for glue.

3. Space Ship - Use cone-shaped ice cream cones. The children frost these and add candies for wings, fins, windows, etc. Slices of gum drops, licorice ropes, raisins, candy corn, life savers, are some candies that lend themselves to this activity.

4. Write a recipe book for use in the playhouse.

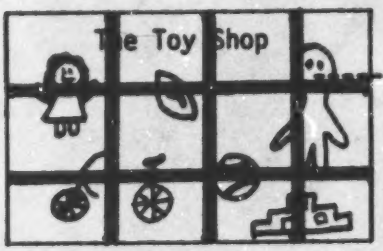
J. Bulletin Boards:

1.



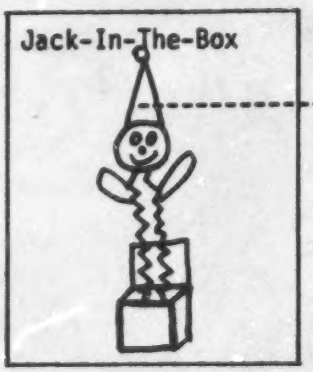
Staple long thin boxes to a bulletin board, open end down. The children can set light weight toys they have made on the shelves.

2.



Children draw and cut out pictures of toys they would like to have. Staple at random over the bulletin board surface. Cover with plastic wrap, and use black paper strips for window effect.

3.



Large Jack-In-The-Box that stands out from the board. Cloth or paper hat, paper plate or styrofoam ball with facial features added for head, accordian folded paper strip body, and a small box at the bottom.

4.

Textured Doll - Use old shoes and dress for body. Make legs, hands, and face out of cloth or manila construction paper. Hair is yarn glued around the head.

K. Resources - Field Trips, People, Etc.:

1. Visit a toy store to see the kinds of toys that could be made.
2. Ask the person who runs the toy store to visit the room and suggest toys that could be made and how to make them.
3. Visit a carpenter's shop to see how toys are made.
4. Ask a potter to visit the class and tell how to make items of clay.
5. Invite an elderly person to visit and share their experiences making toys when they were young.
6. Ask a doll maker to share dolls she has made and explain the process.
7. Visit a train collector and view his electric train setup.

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The Small Listener, Lucille Wood, Bowmar.

"Little Music Box"
"Let's Play"
"Little Girl Rocking Her Dolly"

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"Don't Cry Little Dolly"

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VII. Evaluation:

This is a suggested check list. The items correspond with the objectives. They are broad and general, and comments concerning the degree of specific children's accomplishments can be written in or kept in a separate card file. The check list is to serve as a model and can be extended as your situation demands.

																CHILD'S NAME
																States a problem he has due to lack of toys.
																Offers a solution to the problem.
																Lists and gathers the necessary materials to construct his toy.
																Solves his problem by constructing at least one toy he needs.
																Participates positively in an assembly line.
																States at least one way to use the toy he has constructed.
																Uses the toy he has made in his play.